

Message Text

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ORIGIN EB-11

INFO OCT-01 EUR-25 ISO-00 CIAE-00 COME-00 DODE-00 FMC-04

INR-10 NSAE-00 RSC-01 CG-00 COA-02 DLOS-06 AGR-20 L-03

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----- 003500

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY LISBON PRIORITY

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: ETRN, ENRG, PL

SUBJECT: INABILITY OF US-FLAG VESSELS TO OBTAIN SUFFICIENT
BUNKERS

REF: A) STATE 244003 B) 234084

1. MARITIME OVERSEAS REPORTS THAT TWO OF ITS US-FLAG VESSELS, THE "OVERSEAS TRAVELER" & "OVERSEAS BULKER", CARRYING PL-480 SHIPMENTS (21,000 TONS OF CORN & SORGHUMS RESPECTIVELY) AND ON VOYAGE CHARTER TO GOP, HAVE BEEN REFUSED SUFFICIENT BUNKERS BY SHELL LISBON FOR RETURN TO US FOLLOWING EXPECTED CALLS AT LISBON ON JANUARY 4 & 6 RESPECTIVELY. SHELL LISBON HAS CONFIRMED ONLY 200 TONS FOR "TRAVELER" WHICH REQUIRES TOTAL OF 600 TONS AND 250 TONS FOR "BULKER" WHICH NEEDS 750 TONS. MARITIME OVERSEAS BELIEVES SHORTFALL IS RESULT OF GOP RESTRICTIVE POLICY.

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2. USG ALLOCATION REGULATIONS FOR PETROLEUM PRODUCTS CALL FOR NON-DISCRIMINATORY ALLOCATION OF BUNKER FUELS IN US PORTS WITHOUT REGARD TO FLAG OF REGISTRATION. THESE REGULATIONS, HOWEVER, PROVIDE FOR A MODIFICATION OF SUCH STANDARDS WITH RESPECT TO NATIONS WHOSE POLICIES DISCRIMINATE AGAINST VESSELS PRIMARILY ENGAGED IN THE FOREIGN TRADE

OF THE UNITED STATES. MOST SIGNIFICANT MARITIME NATIONS HAVE ADOPTED OR ARE EXPECTED TO ADOPT THE PRINCIPLE OF

NON-DISCRIMINATION IN BUNKER ALLOCATION. ADDITIONALLY, IT IS NOTED THAT EXISTING STATUTORY AUTHORITY OF THE FEDERAL MARITIME COMMISSION UNDER SECTION 19 OF THE MERCHANT MARINE ACT, 1920, PERMITS THAT AGENCY TO TAKE RETALIATORY ACTION AGAINST THE VESSELS OF THOSE NATIONS WHICH DISCRIMINATE AGAINST VESSELS IN THE FOREIGN TRADE OF THE US.

3. EMBASSY LISBON IS REQUESTED TO CONTACT SHELL AND MARINE OVERSEAS LISBON AGENT (SOCIEDADE COMERCIAL OREY ANTUNES CIA, LA., PRACA DUQUE DA TERCEIRA 4, LISBON) TO OBTAIN LATEST FACTUAL INFORMATION RE: SITUATION AND ATTEMPT TO ARRANGE FOR SUFFICIENT BUNKERS FOR THE TWO US-FLAG VESSELS TO RETURN TO THE US. IF UNABLE TO OBTAIN BUNKERS EMBASSY IS REQUESTED TO APPROACH APPROPRIATE GOP AUTHORITIES TO OBTAIN RATIONALE FOR DECISION REFUSING SUFFICIENT BUNKERS AND ATTEMPT TO RESOLVE BUNKER QUESTION AT THAT LEVEL. EMOFFS MAY DRAW UPON INFORMATION PROVIDED ABOVE AND IN REFTELS IN DISCUSSIONS WITH GOP OFFICIALS. RUSH

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